

Survey of PK-12 School Food Service Providers



About Your Food Service Operation:

For questions 1 to 13, base your responses on the current (2008-2009) school year.

1. How many PK-12 schools are in your school district? _____
2. How is your school food service operation managed?
____ Self-managed
____ Contracted-managed. Name of management company: _____
3. What is your annual food service budget?
Food \$ _____
Labor (not including benefits) \$ _____
Total Operating Cost \$ _____
4. During the school year (September through June), approximately how many reimbursable meals are served each day?
Number of breakfasts _____
Number of lunches _____
Number of dinners _____
Number of after-school snacks _____
5. How many after school snacks are served each day? _____
6. What percent of students are eligible for free/reduced meals (district)? _____ %
7. What is the price charged for a full-price meal in your:

	Breakfast	Lunch
Elementary school(s)	\$ _____	\$ _____
Middle school(s)	\$ _____	\$ _____
High school(s)	\$ _____	\$ _____
8. Did your district provide a summer feeding program in 2008? (Summer feeding programs include meals provided to children in summer camps and other organizations as well as meals provided through National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs.)
____ Yes
____ No
 - 8a. If yes, what was the total number of meals (breakfasts and lunches combined) served during the summer season? _____
9. Do you plan to offer a summer feeding program in 2009? ____ Yes ____ No
10. Do you have salad bars in your district? ____ Yes ____ No

11. Do you sell fresh fruits and vegetables a la carte in your school district? ___Yes ___No

12. Do you sell fresh fruit and vegetables in vending machines in your district? ___Yes ___No

13. The following is a list of equipment helpful in preparing and serving fresh fruits and vegetables. For each piece of equipment, please select the appropriate response for your primary kitchen.

Equipment	Don't have	Don't have, but need	Have, but need more	Have enough
Apple corer				
Cutting boards				
Floor or countertop vegetable chopper				
Fruit/vegetable wedger				
Fryer				
Industrial food processor				
Industrial mixer				
Knives				
Oven				
Salad bar				
Sinks				
Slicer				

Any Additional equipment you find helpful:

Current Buying Practices:

14. Do you purchase any food items through a cooperative bid process? ___Yes ___No

14a. If yes, what categories of food do you purchase in this way? (Please select all that apply.)

___ Fresh fruits and vegetables

___ Dairy products (milk, ice cream, and cheese)

___ Meats

___ Canned or frozen fruits and vegetables

___ Bread

Other:

15. Do you have a prime vendor from whom you purchase a majority of food items? ___Yes ___No

If yes, name of vendor:

16. Do you purchase any fresh fruits and vegetables from this vendor? ___Yes ___No

17. Does your district purchase fresh fruits and vegetables from any other sources? ___Yes ___No

17a. If yes, from what other sources does your district purchase or receive fresh fruits and vegetables? (Please select all that apply.)

___ Produce vendor

- Farmer
- Division of Donated Foods
- Department of Defense Fresh Program
- Other: _____

18. In your district, how many schools do all, part, or none of the meal preparation on site?

- All of the meal preparations on site: _____
- Part of the meal preparations on site: _____
- None of the meal preparations on site: _____

Please complete questions 19 and 20 based on food used during the current year. (If your school participated in either the food service program, or in providing food to camps or other childcare programs in the summer, please include that data as well.)

EXAMPLES:

- Name of Fruit or Vegetable: (e.g., whole potatoes, apples, pears)
- Unit of Purchase: (e.g., case, pound, head, count, dozen)
- Average Number of Units Purchased at One Time: (e.g., 2 cases, 10 pounds, 5 heads)
- Frequency of Purchase: (e.g., weekly, monthly, as needed)
- Average Cost per Unit: (e.g., \$19/case, \$.50/pound, \$1/head)

19. What were the top 5 **WHOLE FRESH FRUITS OR VEGETABLES** purchased? (e.g., whole potatoes, whole apples, whole pears)

Product	Unit of purchase	Avg # units purchased/order	Frequency of purchase	Average Cost per Unit

20. What were the top 5 **PREPARED OR PROCESSED FRESH FRUITS OR VEGETABLES** purchased? (i.e., salad mix, baby carrots, broccoli florets, etc.)

Product	Unit of purchase	Avg # units purchased/order	Frequency of purchase	Average Cost per Unit

Making the Connection with Local Foods

For the purposes of this study, local foods are considered those foods grown in Iowa or a county adjacent to Iowa.

21. Many school food service directors purchase local foods either directly from a farmer or from their usual vendor. Have you ever purchased local foods?

- Yes
- Not that I know of (SKIP TO QUESTION 26)

21a. If yes, please indicate which of the following local foods you have purchased either directly from a farmer or through a vendor. Please also indicate any local foods you have not yet knowingly purchased, but are interested in purchasing. (Check all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Beans, green	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cucumbers	<input type="checkbox"/>	Popcorn
<input type="checkbox"/>	Beans, dry	<input type="checkbox"/>	Garlic	<input type="checkbox"/>	Potatoes, baking
<input type="checkbox"/>	Beets	<input type="checkbox"/>	Kohlrabi	<input type="checkbox"/>	Potatoes, small
<input type="checkbox"/>	Broccoli	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lettuce	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pumpkin
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cabbage	<input type="checkbox"/>	Onions	<input type="checkbox"/>	Squash, summer
<input type="checkbox"/>	Carrots	<input type="checkbox"/>	Peas	<input type="checkbox"/>	Squash, winter
<input type="checkbox"/>	Corn	<input type="checkbox"/>	Peppers	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tomatoes

Other:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Apples	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pears	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strawberries
<input type="checkbox"/>	Grapes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Plums	<input type="checkbox"/>	Watermelon
<input type="checkbox"/>	Melons	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rhubarb	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Other:

22. How much did you spend on local food this year? \$ _____

23. How likely are you to continue purchasing local vegetables?

____ Very Likely ____ Somewhat Likely ____ Not Likely

How likely are you to continue purchasing local fruit?

____ Very Likely ____ Somewhat Likely ____ Not Likely

Comments:

24. If you are NOT LIKELY to purchase local foods again, please indicate why:

(Please select all that apply.)

____ Inconsistent quality ____ Unreliable source ____ Too much effort ____ Too expensive

Other, please specify:

25. From your observations, when you served local fruits and vegetables, did student intake increase, decrease, or stay about the same?

Local vegetables? ____ Increased ____ Stayed the same ____ Decreased

Local fruits? ____ Increased ____ Stayed the same ____ Decreased

____ I have not observed how local foods changed intake

PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 27.

26. Do you have any interest in purchasing local foods? ____ Yes ____ No

____ Not sure, or it depends, please explain:

26a. If yes, please select the foods you are interested in purchasing:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Local Vegetables:		Potatoes, baking		Local Meat:

	Beans, green		Potatoes, small		Turkey
	Beans, dry		Pumpkin		Beef
	Beets		Squash, summer		Pork
	Broccoli		Squash, winter		Chicken
	Cabbage		Tomatoes		
	Carrots				Local Dairy:
	Corn		Local Fruit:		Milk
	Cucumbers		Apples		Cheese
	Garlic		Grapes		Yogurt
	Kohlrabi		Melons		
	Lettuce		Pears		
	Onions		Plums		
	Peas		Rhubarb		
	Peppers		Strawberries		
	Popcorn		Watermelon		

27. In your opinion, what are the potential benefits to serving local food in your district? (Please select all that apply.)

- Students gain greater access to fresh fruits and vegetables
- Schools support the local economy and the local community
- Students have healthier diets
- Schools know the sources of products
- Transportation costs are lower
- Local purchases result in good public relations
- Schools can purchase variable quantities
- Schools can purchase special varieties
- In my opinion, there are no benefits to serving local food in my district

Other comments:

28. What would motivate you to increase the use of local foods in your district? (Please select all that apply.)

- More products available partially processed (baby carrots, salad mix, chopped onions, etc.)
- More products available canned or frozen
- Assurances of food safety
- More producers in area from whom to purchase
- One place to order from multiple farmers (i.e., farmer cooperatives)
- Farmers contacting me and showing me their products
- Regulations that make it easier to purchase directly from farmers
- Financial incentives for purchasing local food
- Additional facilities and/or equipment in the school district to prepare food
- Additional food service staff
- Programs for food service staff to increase culinary skills
- Interest from parents or community members
- Classroom teaching about local foods and agriculture
- Support from district board of education

Other:

29. What concerns do you have about purchasing local foods? (Please select all that apply.)

- Quality
- Food safety
- Adequacy of supply
- Reliability of supply
- Ordering procedures
- Payment procedures
- Delivery considerations
- Seasonal availability of New York fruits and vegetables
- Potential threat to relationship with usual vendor
- Product costs
- Consistency of packaging
- Other:

30. How important is each of the following to increasing the use of local foods in your district?

	Not at all important	Not very important	Somewhat important	Very important
A list of when local foods are available in Iowa				
A list of local farmers willing to sell to schools				
Health and safety information about using local foods				
Regulatory information (procedures for buying from farmers)				
School-tested recipes and menus that use local foods				
Promotional materials about local foods to display				
Information and newsletters to share with families				
Examples of how other school districts use local foods				
Vendor indicates on order sheet where foods come from				

31. Which of the following steps has your district taken to link students with local farms and agriculture in the last three years? (Please select all that apply.)

- Served meals featuring Iowa products
- Provided education about Iowa food and agriculture
- Held a harvest fair
- Invited a farmer to school
- Taken students to visit a farm or farmers' market
- Planted a school garden
- Shared information about local foods with families (i.e., *IA Food of the Month*)
- Held a farmers' market at school
- Visited the Iowa Farm to School Program website

32. Certified kitchen facilities to process local fruits and vegetables have been identified as a need in our region. Would your school willing to open their kitchen facilities for producers to process their product on weekends or during the summer months?" (Select all that apply)

- Yes – open to any producer
- Yes – only certain, approved producers
- Yes – if they were willing to pay a fee
- Yes – if they bring their own equipment
- No

Thank you! The Northeast Iowa Food & Fitness Initiative is working to create stronger links between local farmers and school food service operations in Allamakee, Clayton, Fayette, Howard and Winneshiek counties.

If you are interested in linking your school food service with local farmers, and/or would like to know more about these connections, please provide your name and contact information below. This information will only be used as a way to contact you and/or to send more information about local food connections in your area, and will be kept separate from your survey information.

Contact information (optional):

Name: _____

Title: _____

School District: _____

E-mail: _____

Street Address: _____

City/Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

- Please check here if you are interested in participating in Homegrown Lunch Week – a week in October where schools serve local foods as part of the meals that day/week.
- Please check here if you are interested in being added to the NE IA Farm to School mailing list (Please make sure your name and e-mail address are entered above)

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this survey. Your participation is very important to us. If you have any additional comments regarding this survey or purchasing local foods, feel free to write them here (please write within this box only):

Thank you for your help with this project!

Please complete this questionnaire and return it in the enclosed postage-paid envelope by May 15 to:

Allamakee County Extension
21 Allamakee Street
Waukon, IA 52172
Call: 563-568-6345